

MBA Association Presidential Platform  
Brad Neumann

My MBA Colleagues,

Many of the rankings and values associated with an MBA program depend primarily on the students themselves and not the content of their classes. As the student organization for the MBA program, I feel that the MBAA plays a critical role in creating value for our degree. For rankings based either on general criteria or on specific criteria (such as return on investment), the quality of our degree hinges on the quality of the previous students.

The MBA Association, according to its constitution, is designed to develop "business knowledge, skills and professional contacts for the continued advancement of ourselves, our college, our university and our community." The MBA Association should always remain focused on these core objectives. The MBA Association organizes events (such as the Dinner Club Speaker Series) for CEOs and other experienced professionals to share their knowledge with MBAA members. The MBA Association established a mentor-mentee program so that the second-year students could help first-year students in their classes. Our members develop their professional networking skills at our various social and philanthropic activities hosted by the MBAA. All of these activities create value not only for the students participating in each event, but also for the Flores MBA Program and for LSU as a whole.

As a candidate for President of the MBA Association, I have three main goals: 1) to increase the value that the MBAA create for its members, for LSU and for the Flores MBA Program; 2) to increase the number of active participants in the MBA Association; and 3) to ensure that every member is getting the full value for their membership dues. Our class, the Class of 2011, has been one of the most active classes in recent history, and I want to carry on our traditions to the incoming class.

My primary goal, if elected President, is to maximize the value of each of your memberships. The value of your membership is much greater than simply the number of free drinks covered by the MBAA or the knowledge gained from a Dinner Club Speaker Series. The real value of the MBAA is the professional development of the members and how that development reflects on our university and the rankings of our MBA program. I believe that the value of your membership can be increased with the following policies:

**Professional Development Activities:**

I greatly enjoyed the Dinner Club Speakers Series this year, and I want to continue this beneficial program. The professionals at DCSS provide relevant insight to the students in the MBA program and I feel that these events add a great deal of value to our MBA program. While the speakers may or may not work in the area you are specializing in, the speakers always share a perspective that will make you a better-rounded MBA student.

If elected President of the MBA Association, I will continue to recruit top professionals to speak at our events. I will also work with the communications chair to ensure that everyone in the program is informed and fully aware of the speakers weeks prior to the event. I also pledge to maintain the tradition of catering excellent dinners.

### **Social Activities:**

I will support the social chair with planning and budgeting for social events next year. Last year, I helped create a few events involving the MBA class (the international lunches, baseball tailgates, post-finals bar get-together) and I want to help create similar events next year. I would like to create an MBAA Tailgate at least for a few home games.

Whether the tailgate becomes an officially sanctioned event with MBAA funding or whether it is an MBAA event in name only will depend on the input and opinions of the MBAA officers and MBAA members.

Along with the social chair, I would like to create smaller, less capital intensive MBAA events. For these events, the MBAA would plan the event and pay what is needed to put the event on, but individuals pay for themselves inside of the event (for example, the away game football parties at the Varsity).

### **Concentration Electives:**

Deciding on which classes to take for each concentration is complicated. I worked with Dana Hart and Megan Jurkus last semester to try and improve the process, but we will continue to enhance the process next semester. We can also try to arrange information sessions for each concentration where a few second-year students explain their concentration to first-year students.

### **Funding and Budget:**

Proper budgeting and funds allocation is obviously a very important issue to address. I will work with all of the other MBAA officers to plan the budget and provide the greatest return on your membership dues. As I mentioned in the social activities section, I want to create some looser MBAA events where the MBAA creates and plans an event but individuals would pay for their own drinks or whatnot (i.e. MBAA reserves space in a bar and maybe a few free drinks, then individuals pay more if they want to drink more). This would allow us to host more events without increasing costs, and would be "more fair" for the MBAA members who do not take as much advantage over an open tab as other members.

### **Mentor-Mentee Program:**

The Mentor-Mentee program has great potential for helping the incoming first year students adjust to the MBA program. While it is a good idea for groups to pick their own members, it would be easier and quicker to randomly assign two mentors to four mentees from two different cohorts. This would allow us to assign mentees to mentors before launch week. An early assignment of mentor groups would allow mentees to ask their mentors questions about the program and get insider tips when the mentees are most worried about the program.

Also I would like to designate lunch after the first PoB as a "Mentor-Mentee lunch," where mentors go to lunch with their mentees and get to know them a little better. While we could still schedule a mini-golf event like last year, the Mentor-Mentee Lunch would be a low-key way to start the mentor-mentee program.

While historically there has been a push to allow mentee groups to group themselves, I believe that is a less important for the goal of the Mentor-Mentee program than its timeliness. The goal of the program, as I see it, is to ease the transition into the MBA program, to build friendships between colleagues and to break the ice between

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members. I also think that the mentees' specializations are not important in the process because many students will change their specialization before the second semester.

**MBAA Meetings:**

I want to create more open MBAA meetings with the whole MBAA body next year. It will be difficult to prepare, organize and present this information, but I will work with our officers to ensure that all of your primary concerns are addressed at the beginning and end of each semester. We will give an overview of the budget, state our planned activities and take suggestions for future events. These meetings are designed for non-officers to get information and to contribute their ideas, so I encourage every MBAA member to attend these meetings.

**NAWMBA:**

While nearly seventy percent of the MBA student population (i.e. the male population) is unaware of most issues regarding NAWMBA, I feel it is appropriate to state my position on the issue of whether NAWMBA should be either independent or part of the MBAA.

I believe that NAWMBA shares many of the same goals as the MBAA, however, focus is not entirely conducive to the majority of the MBAA population. Joining NAWMBA and MBAA together would, by definition, reduce the anonymity of NAWMBA and add a layer of bureaucracy that would hurt both organizations.

Therefore, NAWMBA should remain a separate entity from the MBA Association, but we should continue to look for opportunities for joint cooperation such as the Varsity Away Game party, Wine and Cheese party, and Crawfish Boil.

**MBAA Officer Positions:**

Currently, the Golf Tournament Chair is a position that, according to the MBAA Constitution, should be appointed by the previous year's Golf Tournament Chair and confirmed by the President. I propose to amend the constitution to make the Golf Tournament Chair a position that is elected and also to specifically define the roles of the position. While the philanthropy chair would remain a driving force for gathering donations and sponsorships, the Golf Chair would focus more on the logistics of the tournament (i.e. organizing the event with Pelican Point, creating signs for the event, planning the starting locations for the teams, and making sure everything that needs to get done gets done).

I would like to create a new, first-year level officer position of a Junior Philanthropy Chair (or Junior Golf Tournament Chair). The duties of this chair would be to assist with the planning and execution of the MBAA Golf Tournament. The purpose of this chair position is to help add more continuity between each annual golf tournament and to help finding sponsorships easier each year. Laney Joffrion did a fantastic job organizing the event this year, and I believe we could build off of her hard work even better if we had someone working with her to carry on her work for the following year.

**My Experience:**

While I have had many various leadership positions, I have never had a position as important as the President of the MBA Association. I cannot guarantee my success if elected President, but I can guarantee that I will continue with the same leadership

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approach that has been successful for me in the past. I prefer to rely on my teammates to ensure our team's success, instead of consistently relying on my own judgment. I know that I am not always the best leader for every situation, but I see that as an advantage to use my teammates to their full potential.

I have worked with many of you on various projects either in class or with the MBAA. I prefer to listen to the experience of others while working in a team and I hope my teammates would agree that I am both action oriented and also open to ideas, critiques and suggestions.

I was elected leader of the Green Cohort this year and I have worked to disseminate information to my cohort and help create events. As Cohort Leader, I helped plan and communicate events for the MBA Association, as well as some smaller, less official MBA related events (such as the St. Patrick's Day bar get-together and baseball tailgates). I lead several team projects in the past, and I have learned from both my successes and failures.

During my undergraduate degree at Michigan State University, I took a television directing class and directed several various scripted videos. While the course focused on very technical elements, I found that the most consistent way to be a successful leader is to surround yourself with experience, qualified individuals and assign them to tasks where they excel. I know all of the candidates running for an MBA officer position, and I also know that they each have tremendous abilities, skills and insight. So half the work is already done.

**Conclusion:**

It is an honor to be considered for the position of President of the LSU Flores MBA Association. I will do my best to uphold the MBAA constitution and to meet all of your expectations. I will serve with the honesty, diligence, and leadership that we have come to expect from our colleagues in the MBA program at LSU.

I am grateful to be in one of the most active MBA classes in recent years-- a class that has participated in events in record numbers. I am humbled by the support and friendship you all have shown to me this past year.

The students in the MBA program are the driving force behind the success of the Flores MBA program and I hope that with all of your continued support and engagement in the MBA Association activities that we can continue to improve our program and experiences at LSU.

Thank you for your consideration,

Brad Neumann